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ABSTRACT

Arizona's state plan for the education of homeless children and youth responds to provisions of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. The plan is comprised of seven sections. Section 1 summarizes the homeless situation and the plan's origins and intent. Section 2 provides an assessment of the number, location, and educational status of homeless children and youth in Arizona. Section 3 describes the charge and activities of the Superintendent's Task Force on Education for Homeless Children and Youth and lists Task Force membership. Section 4 discusses the following barriers to homeless education: (1) lack of awareness on the part of school personnel and the public at large; (2) personal barriers; (3) legal barriers; (4) educational barriers; (5) lack of support services; and (6) lack of adequate funding. Section 5 describes the key goals, state policies and actions, and local responsibilities for the elimination or reduction of the barriers presented in Section 4. Section 6 outlines measures for the implementation, follow-up, and monitoring of the plan. Section 7 includes the following appendices: (1) definitions and a summary of McKinney Act provisions; (2) a reprint of Subtitle B of the McKinney Act; (3) Arizona revised statutes applicable to homeless education; (4) exemplary local programs; and (5) survey forms. (AF)

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STATE PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN ARIZONA

March 1989

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
C. Diane Bishop, Superintendent

Office of Education for Homeless Children and Youth
Bill H. Scheel, Coordinator

UD 026 947

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the problems of at-risk students have come to the forefront of American education. Students who are at risk are more likely to fail in school and ultimately become dropouts.

It is hard to imagine any group of children who fit the profile of at-risk students more than the homeless. Homeless children often lack adequate food, clothing, and health care, and most importantly, by definition they lack a safe, regular, and adequate place to sleep every night. Constant transiency and overriding concern for survival result in many children never meaningfully entering a school system. Children who do make it to school are confronted with barriers not faced by even the most deprived students who have a place to call home. What kind of future can these children expect?

Current trends do not encourage optimism. The fastest growing group of homeless today are families with children. They are homeless not because of alcoholism or mental illness (although these are often contributing factors), but because of the lack of affordable housing and the inability to increase wage levels at the same rate as housing costs.

In response to the growing population of homeless throughout the country, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in 1987. Among the aspects of the Act are provisions for the education of homeless children and youth. In accordance with the Act, the Arizona Department of Education has prepared a plan to address those provisions. The plan was adopted by the Arizona Board of Education on March 27, 1989.

Included as a part of the plan is an assessment of the numbers, location, and educational status of homeless children in Arizona. Also included is a summary of the work of a special task force appointed by State School Superintendent C. Diane Bishop. The task force, made up of educators, social service providers, and other interested citizens from throughout the state, was charged with identifying barriers to education of homeless children and developing recommendations to eliminate or reduce those barriers.

The "action plan" contained in Section V of this document is a direct outgrowth of the work of the Superintendent's Task Force. Activities to be taken by the state or local educational agencies are grouped in categories based on the barriers identified by the task force. Included are the broad goals to be achieved, state policies needed to achieve the goals, and specific actions and responsibilities of the state and local educational agencies.

This plan is designed to be "user-friendly," to provide school districts and service providers with help and suggestions for assisting homeless children. The plan will be subject to modification as more data are gathered and experiences with specific programs demonstrate success or lack thereof.

Funding for new programs or mandated requirements is a legitimate concern for school districts as well as Arizona taxpayers. The fiscal impacts of specific parts of the plan are discussed, and implementing portions of the plan is contingent on obtaining additional funds.

The following plan presents a number of options which individual districts and their respective social service personnel may consider depending on the size and specific needs of the district.

II. ASSESSMENT OF THE NUMBER, LOCATION, AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

One of the requirements of the McKinney Act is for each state Department of Education to conduct an assessment of the number and location of homeless children and youth throughout the state.

In addition, the legislation requires an effort to ascertain "the nature and extent of problems of access to, and placement of, homeless children and homeless youth in elementary and secondary schools, and the difficulties in identifying the special needs of such children."

As part of that assessment, the Arizona Department of Education:

1. Surveyed all homeless shelter providers, as identified in the Arizona Comprehensive Housing Assistance Plan (CHAP), during the month of November 1988;
2. Surveyed all Arizona school districts in early December; and,
3. Consulted with various advocates of the homeless, health service providers, and law enforcement agencies.

This section will begin by discussing numbers and demographics of homeless children living in shelters and outside shelters; and then move on to discuss the educational situations and challenges reported by both groups.

NUMBERS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Shelters

Of approximately 120 Arizona facilities that provide shelter to the homeless, at least 66 provide shelter to homeless children or to homeless families with children. 50 of the facilities (75 percent) responded to our detailed questionnaire about the children they served in a recent month (October 1988). Data on the other 16 were developed from homeless service directories and extrapolated based on the responses received from similar facilities. The result is a reasonably reliable snapshot of the number of children in Arizona shelters and the problems they face. Numbers could be slightly low because of the possibility of functioning shelters which are not included in the CHAP directory.

A wide variety of shelter types are provided, ranging from hotel/motel vouchers to transitional housing. Respondents categorized themselves, and a few offered more than one kind of shelter. In those cases, we placed the facility in the category that seemed most appropriate. The types of housing provided, their locations, and the number of children served on a typical night can be seen in Table 1.

As can be seen in Table 1, most homeless children can be found in transitional housing and in domestic violence shelters, while relatively few are in runaway shelters or are being provided hotel or motel vouchers.

Table 1: Number of facilities and average number of children served per night, by region and type of shelter (number of facilities/children served per night)

	Maricopa	Pima	rural	total
Emergency shelters	8/74	2/4	2/8	12/86
Hotel/motel vouchers	2/4	--	6/14	8/18
Runaway shelters	1/13	1/13	2/12	4/38
Domestic violence shelters	10/95	3/32	10/57	23/184
Transitional housing	9/113	4/64	--	13/177
Child crisis center	4/30	1/26	1/10	6/66
TOTAL	34/279	11/139	21/100	66/569

The number of facilities providing shelter is surprisingly large to casual observers, as is the geographic spread of the facilities. In Maricopa County, for example, the problem of homelessness is often viewed as a downtown Phoenix problem, but there are homeless children staying in shelters in Mesa, Glendale, and even the Town of Paradise Valley. Central Arizona Shelter Services in downtown Phoenix houses only about five percent of the county's homeless children that are in a shelter on any given night.

The length of time a child remains in a shelter facility varies depending largely on the type of shelter used. Most children, however, are in a shelter facility 2-4 weeks. (Table 2)

Table 2: Length of stay in homeless shelter facility

Type of facility	Length of stay
Emergency shelters	1 night-1 month
Hotel/motel vouchers	1 night-1 week
Runaway shelters	1-2 weeks
Domestic violence shelters	2 weeks-1 month
Transitional housing	1 month-1 year
Child crisis centers	1 week-1 month
Average stay	2-4 weeks

Children in Arizona shelters are evenly split between preschool

age and school age (Table 3). That finding reflects statistics from other studies from throughout the country. The mean age of children in Boston shelters is 6.4 years (Bassuk et al., 1988). The median age of homeless children in Colorado is 6.2 years (Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, 1988). Our survey suggests a mean or median age of between 5 and 6 years among children staying in Arizona shelters.

Table 3: Age of children in Arizona shelters
(average night, October 1988)

Age	N	%
0-2 years	145	25.4 %
3-4	133	23.4
5-11	172	30.4
12-14	56	9.8
15-17	63	11.0
Total	569	100.0 %

One of the most striking things about these numbers is the low number of homeless adolescents that show up. According to the Colorado study, "Homeless youth are less likely to utilize traditional homeless services than other individuals. They are also generally fearful of authorities forcing them to return to their families." A further discussion of the "missing adolescents" will follow later in this section.

Non-Shelter Homeless Children

Determining the number of homeless children who are not staying in temporary public shelter is difficult. To make our estimates as accurate as possible, we:

1. Conducted a written survey of all 217 Arizona school districts. As of January 9, 123 districts had responded to the survey. Of those, 22 districts said they were serving homeless children.

2. Consulted with organizations that provided outreach services to homeless families, such as Phoenix South Mental Health Clinic, Maricopa County Department of Health, El Rio Health Clinic in Tucson, and Catholic Social Services of Tucson.

3. Consulted with other advocates for the homeless throughout the state to learn of locations where homeless were staying. Particularly helpful was a 1987 study of the homeless population in the First Water area of the Tonto National Forest near Apache Junction, conducted by Daniel L. Mariani and Louisa R. Stark.

4. Interviewed other local government and law enforcement

agencies, such as the Phoenix Police Department.

Based on the survey and interviews, there are a minimum of 300 school-age children on the streets, in the desert, or in cars, campers, buses, or tents, usually living with one parent and siblings. This number may be low because some school districts have not responded to our survey, and because there are probably some pockets of homeless families unidentified by any government body.

The majority of the children identified live with their families in rural parts of Arizona, primarily on public lands in the Colorado River, Prescott, Wickenburg, and Apache Junction areas, with smaller numbers in such places as Willcox, Casa Grande, and Flagstaff. Fifteen of the 22 districts which acknowledged serving homeless children were outside of metropolitan areas. Phoenix and Tucson have relatively small numbers of homeless families with children living primarily in dry riverbeds.

Demographic information on the children and their families is hard to come by. School district responses from the rural areas indicate that the homeless children they educate are primarily in the younger primary grades, with fewer numbers in the older elementary grades and middle school, and very few in secondary school. Thus, the age ranges appear similar to homeless children in shelters. If that is true, one can to assume that there are about 300 children younger than school age living without any shelter.

One contrast with shelter demographics, however, is in the length of time residing in one place. The rural districts report most of their homeless children live on the public lands for most of the year and attend school for anywhere from two to six months. This is in sharp contrast to the average shelter stay of 2-4 weeks.

The First Water study pointed out other differences between the homeless living on public lands and the homeless living in urban shelters. A much higher percentage of First Water inhabitants were longtime Arizona residents, worked full- or part-time, and had families. "The reason most often mentioned by married individuals for staying at First Water, as opposed to an urban setting, was personal safety," the study said. "Virtually all respondents considered the streets, parks, and shelters of Phoenix as unsafe and inappropriate for women and children."

The study also reports that one of the reasons families gravitated to First Water was because of the availability of busing into local Apache Junction schools. (Because of long-term damage to the public lands, the Forest Service closed down the First Water camping area in July 1988 and evicted its homeless tenants.)

Missing Adolescents

A phenomenon of recent exploration is that of "throwaway" or "displaced" kids. These are usually adolescents who may be runaways, or may even be abandoned or kicked out by their families. National studies

estimate up to 1 million runaways per year (Burgess, 1986). These children are often victims of physical or sexual abuse before they leave home and are subject to exploitation after leaving.

Two local case studies provide examples. A student at a private high school in Phoenix was kicked out of his home by his parents. He lived in his station wagon for a month before finding accommodations with a friend. In the second case, another high school student alternately ran away and was kicked out of his home. He eventually settled in a local "crash house" with three other teens in similar situations. The home was rented by one of the teens' 19-year-old brother, who let the younger boys come and go as they pleased.

How many of these adolescents might there be in Arizona? Scattered school districts do report these kinds of incidents, but it is impossible to venture any guesses as to their extent. 1980 census figures do provide a clue, however. According to the census, there were 16,342 Arizonans ages 5-17 living with: a partner or roommate; other non-relatives; or relatives other than spouse, parent, or sibling. How many of those children should be considered homeless?

Three high school districts were surveyed for displaced children. The districts provided varied but conservative estimates of one (1) percent to ten (10) percent of secondary students as displaced, usually after running away from home or being abandoned by parents. These children are essentially homeless and living with friends or relatives.

The range of figures was applied across all secondary students in Arizona. Then census figures were used to develop ratios of displaced children in other age groups. Based on those computations, it is estimated that there are a minimum of 5,431 school-age children living with friends and relatives who are essentially homeless, and the number could be as high as 27,155.

Hotels and motels

No count was taken of homeless children who might be staying with their families at hotels within the state; except for those who are being assisted by service providers and are included in the numbers above as staying in shelter facilities. Surveys in other western states and a few local anecdotes indicate there may be significant numbers of children in hotels.

Summary

Our surveys and interviews indicate that about 569 children live in Arizona shelters for an average of 2-4 weeks, although some stays are significantly longer. Based on reported rates of repeat usage of shelters, it is likely that as many as 8,000 different children pass through Arizona shelters in the course of a year.

About 600 children in families lack shelter or any kind and live on the street or in the desert, usually for several months at a time.

Approximately half of those children are of school age. In addition, there 5,431-27,155 school-age Arizonans who should be considered homeless, living with friends or relatives.

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND THE SCHOOLS

Attendance

According to our survey of homeless shelter providers, attempts are made by most facilities to provide education services to school-age children. Those attempts vary by type of facility.

Of the 50 shelter providers responding to our detailed survey, 40, covering about 80 percent of the children, make efforts to place the children in an educational program. In many cases, however, the attempts take a much lower priority than the effort expended for food, shelter, and survival.

In general, domestic violence shelters have the best record of ensuring public school attendance. The overwhelming majority of children attend public schools, and many of these shelters reported strong working relationships with local school districts. One can assume that their longer history of working with displaced children has allowed them to develop those relationships. Shelters for pregnant teens (which are included in transitional housing) also have long records of ensuring on-going education for their residents.

Other facilities do not have as much success. Providers of hotel and motel vouchers indicate they have little or no knowledge of what happens with children in families they assist. Likewise, school attendance for young residents of many emergency shelters is sporadic at best.

Several shelters, including Central Arizona Shelter Services in Phoenix and Casa de los Ninos in Tucson, provide on-site instruction for school age children. Such a program ensures higher attendance and minimizes other problems described below.

Much of the data for children living in the streets and deserts was obtained from our school district survey, so it is very difficult to determine how many children in that category there might be who are not attending school. Anecdotal information suggests that about 60 percent of these children attend school.

Perceived Barriers to Education

Eighteen school districts (15 percent) reported major difficulties in educating homeless children (Table 4). Reported most often as problems were transiency, performance significantly below grade level, low self-esteem, physical deprivation, and lack of discipline or socialization skills.

Table 5 shows some similarities in the responses of shelter

Table 4: Major difficulties in educating homeless children, reported by school districts*

Number of districts educating homeless children: 22
Number of districts reporting difficulties: 18

N	Types of difficulties
13	Transiency
12	Performance significantly below grade level
11	Low self-esteem
10	Physical deprivation (hunger, inadequate clothing)
10	Lack of discipline and socialization skills
7	Learning disabilities or handicaps
7	Lack of parent involvement
5	Truancy
4	Administrative (admission, recordkeeping, etc.)
4	Lack of preparation for school (materials, supplies)
-	Transportation

*The survey form provided the choices listed above and respondents were instructed to mark all applicable.

Table 5: Difficulties encountered in enrolling homeless children or keeping them in school, reported by shelter providers*

Number of shelters with children in education programs: 40
Number of shelters reporting difficulties: 27

N	Types of difficulties
13	Transiency
10	Administrative (admission, recordkeeping, etc.)
7	Transportation
5	Performance significantly below grade level
5	Low self-esteem
4	Lack of discipline or socialization skills
3	Physical deprivation (hunger or inadequate clothing)
3	Learning disabilities or handicaps
3	Truancy
3	Lack of preparation for school (material, supplies)
-	Lack of parent involvement

*Two open-ended questions concerning difficulties encountered in enrolling homeless children and special curriculum and logistical needs were used. Responses were grouped in categories similar to those in Table 4 for comparison purposes.

providers, but significant differences emerge as well.

While transiency, performance below grade level, low self-esteem, and lack of discipline and socialization skills are mentioned frequently by both groups, shelter providers perceive much more difficulty with administrative matters and transportation than the school districts do.

Specifically, shelter providers say they have difficulty providing birth certificates, immunization records, and school records they are told are necessary for admission. Most school districts, however, do not see that problem. In fact, several districts, with reported annual turnover rates of up to 40 percent in their student bodies, said obtaining records for homeless children was no more difficult than for the majority of their other transfer students.

Transportation was also seen as a need by some shelter providers, particularly those in urban areas who serve children who may have been attending schools from many different districts throughout the area.

Thirteen school districts (11 percent) report refusing admission to homeless children. Seven of those are districts included in the 22 noted above that have served homeless children. Six have apparently turned away the only homeless children who have applied. No numbers were gathered on the numbers of homeless children denied admission.

Table 6 lists the reasons given for turning away homeless children.

Table 6: Reasons districts have not admitted homeless children

Number of districts which have refused admission to homeless children: 13

N	Reason child was refused admission
8	Child living outside school district boundary
5	Lack of immunization records
4	No permanent address
4	Child living with friend or relative
2	Lack of birth certificate or proper identification

III. THE SUPERINTENDENT'S TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

In December 1988, C. Diane Bishop, Superintendent of Public Instruction, appointed a task force to examine the barriers to education of homeless children in Arizona and to make recommendations on efforts to eliminate or reduce those barriers.

Members of the task force are:

Julie Bare, Assistant Principal, Bullhead City Intermediate School
Betty Bell, Mohave County School Superintendent
Terry Cook, Department of Economic Security
Wanda Ellingson, Assistant Director of Casa de los Ninos, a children's shelter in Tucson
Jane Irvine, Arizona Children's Action Alliance
Philip Kinsey, Principal, Dunbar Elementary School, Phoenix Elementary District
Kevin Lanigan, Executive Director, Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest
Betty Inman Lee, Member, Arizona State Board of Education
Beverly Lippi, Client Services Manager, Central Arizona Shelter Services, Phoenix
Marcia Newman, Executive Director, and Robert Dye, Superintendent, Phoenix Special Programs
Karyn Parker, Executive Director, Sojourner Domestic Shelter, Phoenix
Elaine Rice, Assistant Superintendent, Tucson Unified School District
Dr. Roger Romero, Assistant Superintendent, Phoenix Union High School District
Louisa Stark, Chairman, Phoenix Consortium for the Homeless
Sandra Wiley and Susan Young, Social Work Department, Washington Elementary District, Phoenix
Dr. William Wright, Superintendent, and Dr. Barry Sutter, Director of Curriculum, Apache Junction School District
Ann Young, Counselor, Amphitheater High School, Tucson

Members of the task force represent urban and rural school districts, government agencies and non-profit organizations, and school officials at virtually every level.

Their charge is to examine the barriers to education faced by homeless children, and develop recommendations to eliminate or reduce those barriers. The first meeting of the task force, on December 20, 1988, was largely devoted to a brainstorming session identifying potential barriers to education. The results of that session are listed in the Section IV.

The task force met for a second time on January 23, 1989. The group discussed specific proposals to eliminate the barriers identified in the previous meeting. Specific topics covered were procedures for placement of homeless children, tracking systems, responsibilities of local districts, and the need for and potential sources of additional

funding. The conclusions reached at that meeting are reflected in the plan.

The task force met again on February 15 to take public comment on the draft plan, discuss the plan, and recommend appropriate changes. Task force members had a number of comments about the draft, most of which were incorporated into the final plan.

The draft plan was made available for public review February 1, when it was mailed to shelter providers, LEA superintendents, and other interested parties throughout the state. A presentation on the plan was made to the Tucson Planning Council for the Homeless on February 9, and a public hearing was held that same date. No comments on the plan were received at that hearing. A February 15 public hearing attracted people interested in reviewing the proposal but no significant input, other than from members of the task force.

Paid advertisements in the Tribune newspaper and the Arizona Daily Star in early February alerted the public to the availability of the plan and the public hearings. A number of newspaper and radio stories in mid-February also served to alert the public about the issue and the existence of the state plan.

IV. BARRIERS TO EDUCATION

The Superintendent's Task Force listed a broad range of potential barriers to education faced by homeless children. After coming up with dozens of potential barriers, the task force grouped the barriers into six major categories:

1. Lack of awareness of the problem on the part of school personnel and the public-at-large
2. Personal barriers
3. Legal barriers
4. Educational barriers
5. Lack of support services
6. Lack of adequate funding

Following is a more detailed discussion of each category.

1. Lack of Awareness

There was a clear consensus on the task force that the most serious barrier to homeless children receiving an appropriate public education was a lack of awareness of the problem. Most districts responding to our survey indicated they did not have homeless children in the district or did not know if they did, while our survey of homeless shelters indicated homeless children were enrolled in several of the districts or had been denied admission for some reason.

Task force members also reported common, and in many cases, understandable, attitudes of specific school personnel: admission clerks who saw homeless children as creating more paperwork than their short stays might justify; teachers who saw homeless children disrupting classes through frequent comings and goings; and students who saw homeless children as someone lower on the socio-economic ladder to be picked on, and were offended by their odor and appearance.

In brief, schools and the public-at-large are often unaware of homeless children in their midst, and are unaware of the special problems these children face. The attitudinal problems stem from lack of information, misinformation, and prejudice. Part of the problem comes from difficulties in providing a firm definition of homelessness.

Complicating the situation is an issue casting a shadow over the entire educational establishment - reconciling our increased reliance on standardized testing for school and district evaluation with the knowledge that enrolling and keeping at-risk students in school is likely to lower aggregate test scores, at least in the short run.

2. Personal Barriers

The personal barriers faced by homeless children largely revolve around issues of health, both physical and mental. Homeless children are often inadequately fed and clothed, and have poor hygiene habits. Parents are often reluctant to send a child to school under such circumstances.

Shelter and school personnel also report homeless children demonstrating a significant number of mental and emotional health needs. Children lack self-esteem and often have poor socialization skills, which may cause discipline problems in the classroom. Among homeless adolescents, alcohol and substance abuse can be a significant problem.

There is little hard research in this area. In a study of school-age children in a Boston homeless shelter, 51 percent were found to be depressed and required further clinical evaluation. (Ellen L. Bassuk, 1986). In the same shelter, 47 percent of pre-school children given the Denver Developmental Test exhibited impairments in language skills and motor and social development.

Other significant personal barriers to education are the attitudes of the homeless themselves. Homeless parents and adolescents often have little knowledge of available services and their rights to a public education. In addition, homeless parents often fear that enrolling their children in school could lead to the children being taken away by Child Protective Services due to neglect or mistreatment, and adolescents fear they may be forced to return to untenable family situations or be placed in the juvenile justice system.

3. Legal Barriers

As indicated in the earlier assessment, shelter providers perceive many more barriers in the admission and records requirement area than school personnel. Part of the problem is differing interpretations of residency laws and admission requirements.

Many districts have a liberal policy of admitting any child who indicates he or she is staying in the district. Other districts put a significant burden on the child to prove place of residency, guardianship, and proper immunizations before admission can take place.

Several examples of district admission requirements that were more strict than state law were given. Other examples fell into gray areas of the law which could be interpreted in several ways. Some of the examples encountered included:

a. A district claims that a homeless family staying in the district is not legally residing in the district, but are legal residents of their original district

b. The district requires birth certificate and/or immunization record prior to initiating enrollment

c. The district's transportation system does not extend to area where homeless families are staying

d. The child or youth no longer lives with parents or guardian, who live in a district different than one child is staying in

e. The child is enrolled prior to receiving immunizations but is unable to receive shots because of lack of money or transportation, and is expelled

f. The child is unable to provide street address or proof of residence, or district will not accept shelter or campground as address

g. Homeless children who have been enrolled but dropped for non-attendance are denied re-admission because of previous disruptive behavior

Other legal issues mentioned by the task force overlapped into other areas. They included:

- Legal rights of the homeless
- The legal status of schools located in homeless shelters
- The role of Child Protective Services

4. Educational Barriers

The single biggest educational barrier school districts see with homeless children is access to current academic and testing records of homeless children. Districts find themselves spending days determining the proper placement for homeless children, only to have the child leave shortly after finally ending up in the right classroom. For a highly transient child, in some cases the child spends more time being screened and tested for proper placement than receiving instruction. A process that would provide quick transfer of records from one district to another could alleviate the problem.

There was a consensus among task force members that homeless children should be integrated into neighborhood public schools whenever possible, and that shelter schools should be utilized only until it is clear the public schools are prepared to meet the educational needs of the homeless child.

Another issue discussed was the need for specialized curriculum. Some task force members advocated a specialized curriculum emphasizing life skills, and others proposed a portable curriculum that students could take with them from school to school.

There was some differing views on the educational attainment of

homeless children, with many school officials observing children performing significantly below grade level. Testing conducted at the Central Arizona Shelter Schoolhouse indicated most children were performing two grade levels below their peers of the same age.

Described as an important need was expanded summer programs so homeless children can take advantage of educational opportunities year-round.

Task force members cautioned that needs of homeless children could vary significantly between rural and urban districts, and between districts that have growing and declining enrollments.

5. Lack of Support Services

Transportation may have been the most intractable barrier discussed by the task force. Two specific situations were cited:

- A child enrolled in one school district becomes homeless and is temporarily staying in another adjoining district. She is unable to obtain transportation to the district school in which she is enrolled.

- The bus route for a rural school district does not pass near a known camping area for homeless families within the district or just outside the district boundaries. The homeless families have no means to provide transportation to the nearest pick-up spot.

To a large extent, this issue more than any other comes down to money. Who will pay for the additional transportation needs for homeless children?

Another support service need mentioned was day-care for homeless preschoolers; first, to provide them with as much assistance as possible to prepare them for school; and second, to allow the parents to focus on the educational needs of their older children. Other needs for support services have been largely folded into the "personal barriers" section.

6. Lack of Adequate Funding

"The only way this is going to work well is for the Department of Education to provide the resources, not only for transportation, but for educating homeless children."

So said the superintendent of the school district that probably does more for homeless children than any other district in the state. His statement reflected the task force consensus that special efforts to bring homeless children fully into the public school system will cost money - money most districts don't have.

Budget controls on most local school districts do not permit the addition of special programs to address special problems - there

is no way to raise the money except by cutting existing programs.

Task force members say additional funds are needed and could be used for such specific items as transportation, social workers, expanded meal program, nurses, after-school and summer school programs, psychologists, fax machines to speed the transfer of records, and showers for children to clean themselves in the morning.

V. THE PLAN TO ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

This section describes the key goals, specific state policies and actions, and local responsibilities in eliminating or reducing the barriers outlined in Section IV.

1. Awareness barriers

KEY GOAL: Homelessness is often a hidden problem, particularly in the public school system. School personnel at all levels must become aware of the potential for homeless students to appear in their schools, the special problems homeless children face, and their responsibilities under state and federal law.

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) should undertake a major effort to raise the awareness of school personnel and educate them on the issue of homeless children. School personnel who need information include:

School board members
Superintendents
Attendance/admission officers
Counselors
Social workers
Principals
Teachers
Nurses
Clerical staff involved in processing admissions

It will be important for ADE to work with professional organizations representing those workers to efficiently disseminate the necessary information. Groups such as the Arizona School Boards Association and the Arizona Education Association can provide the framework for much of the communications. ADE will also participate in spponsorship of a major state or regional conference focusing on homeless children.

In addition, districts in high priority areas should be targeted for individualized meetings and training.

Communications should stress:

The importance of getting the homeless into schools
The hidden nature of the problem
McKinney Act mandates
Outreach and intervention methods
The economic benefit of educating the homeless
Community resources available to help
Models of successful programs or methods

Technical assistance in developing specific programs and procedures to assist homeless children should be provided by ADE. Providers of social services to homeless children and families

should be involved in training and technical assistance as much as possible.

(One task force member, an advocate on behalf of the homeless, commented about a lack of interest she perceived among school personnel about the issue of homeless children. Perhaps as long as the major topic of presentations and other communications is the "problem" of homeless children, such disinterest will continue. Once specific ideas, methods, and programs are offered to alleviate the problem, however, it is likely interest will increase. That should be the goal of the ADE education effort.)

The ADE also has a responsibility to inform homeless children, their parents, and their shelter providers of the opportunity for public education, the requirements of the McKinney Act, and the responsibilities of local school districts. The general public should also be kept informed as to the nature and extent of the problem and efforts being taken to eliminate the problem.

The responsibilities of local school districts should be to:

Maintain an attitude of respect for homeless children and their families
Seek out homeless children and families within their boundaries, notifying them of their rights to free and appropriate education, and encouraging them to enroll
Take advantage of training sessions or seminars sponsored by ADE or other groups to learn more about programs or methods to assist homeless children
Keep their community informed as to district efforts through such groups as PTA

2. Personal Barriers

KEY GOAL: The problems of homeless children cannot be addressed solely through the public school system. Interaction and cooperation among schools, government service agencies, and private service agencies should be encouraged.

STATE ACTIONS:

a. Work with state food and nutrition program specialists to make sure homeless children and youth have complete access to free breakfast and lunch programs.
b. Develop linkages with professional associations to provide medical, psychological, and counseling services to homeless children and youth.
c. Explore other sources, such as the Department of Economic Security and the Arizona Department of Health Services, for funding for health and nutrition services for homeless children and youth.
d. Develop a resource directory of public and private service providers to homeless children, youth, and families to distribute to school districts.

RECOMMENDED LOCAL ACTIONS:

a. Work with local food and nutrition program specialists to make sure homeless children and youth have complete access to free breakfast and lunch programs.
b. Develop linkages with local professional associations to provide medical, psychological, and counseling services to homeless children and youth.
c. Develop regular linkages with other social service agencies and provide referrals to those agencies based on school screening.

3. Legal Barriers

KEY GOAL: Residency, guardianship, and records requirements should not be used to keep homeless children and youth from receiving a free and appropriate education.

STATE ACTIONS:

a. A review of state residency and admittance requirements is underway, and discussions with the Attorney General's office are continuing. If it is determined that changes to the statutes are needed, recommendations for changes in the statutes will be drafted and presented to the Legislature in 1990. If legislation is not needed, ADE will prepare a policy memorandum outlining the proper interpretation of the statutes and distribute it to all school districts.
b. Admission and enrollment policies and procedures of local districts will be reviewed by the state on an as-needed basis to ensure they comply with state and federal law.

REQUIRED LOCAL ACTION:

Local districts must review admission and enrollment policies and procedures to ensure that illegal barriers to education are eliminated.

DETERMINING THE PLACEMENT OF HOMELESS CHILDREN

A. Legal Requirements

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act contains the following requirement:

"The local educational agency of each homeless child or youth shall either -
(A) continue the child's education in the school district of origin for the remainder of the year; or
(B) enroll the child or youth in the school district where the child or youth is actually living; whichever is in the child's or youth's best interest."

The Act requires that the state plan contain provisions designed to -

(A) authorize the State educational agency, the local educational agency, the parent or guardian of the homeless child, the homeless youth, or the applicable social worker to make the determinations required; and

(B) provide procedures for the resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth.

B. An Example

A child has been a resident and been enrolled in the Scottsdale School District. Her family becomes homeless and is staying in the Central Arizona Shelter Services facility in Phoenix. The parents hope to return to Scottsdale when they are back on their feet. Phoenix Elementary District is willing to enroll the child, but the parents want the child to stay in the Scottsdale District. What happens?

The Act makes clear that the child can remain in the Scottsdale school, if it is determined to be in her best interest. The question is, who should make that determination?

C. A Possible Approach

The goals of of the determination and dispute resolution process should be: speed, to ensure the child is not in limbo while her fate is being decided; and a broad range of input, to encourage consensus about the best interests of the child.

In the case described above, the people involved in the decision should be the parents, the CASS family caseworker, a representative of the Scottsdale school (preferably one who has first hand knowledge of the child's school history), and a representative of Phoenix Elementary. The process could be initiated by any of the parties, but the caseworker should be the lead person, if possible. Although the process begins informally, sufficient documentation should be maintained by all parties to allow for later review.

A significant issue to be confronted in this situation is who should provide transportation. If Scottsdale was required to pay for transportation to the district from the shelter, there would be a heavy, built-in bias on its part to recommend the child enroll in the Phoenix school.

Therefore, no such requirement is made. Cost and convenience of transportation should be one of a number of factors to be considered. Many shelters provide bus tokens to their clients, which could be used in this kind of situation. Alternative methods of transportation can be explored.

If a consensus is reached that the child would be best served

by staying in the Scottsdale school, Scottsdale would be responsible for continuing the child's enrollment.

What happens if a consensus is not reached? Each district has its own complaint resolution process which can be utilized if there is a dispute over the placement of the child (the state Department of Education should review these procedures as needed to ensure they are sufficient to protect the rights of the child).

Most importantly, if there is a dispute, the child should not remain in limbo but should be immediately enrolled in the district in which she is physically present until the dispute is resolved.

Finally, because of the burden the McKinney Act puts on the state to enforce the law, ADE should provide an opportunity for an appeal of last resort.

4. Educational Barriers

KEY GOAL: To the extent possible, homeless children should attend regular schools (public or private) and be exposed to regular curriculum based on their individual needs. Special programs may be needed to assist schools in providing those basic services.

STATE ACTIONS:

The following list presents a wide range of possible activities for ADE to undertake. Exploration of costs and feasibility will be conducted for all, but it is unlikely that all will be pursued.

a. Develop resource and testing kits for school districts, with different models for urban and rural districts
b. Develop resource kits for shelters, outlining steps to be taken to enroll children in school and providing guidance on activities to improve children's educational performance
c. Undertake testing and screening programs at homeless shelters to see if developmental, physical, emotional, psychological, and educational needs of homeless children can be generalized
d. Develop a portable curriculum, emphasizing life skills. This could be modeled on the migrant PASS program, but would probably only be effective on the secondary level.
e. Develop a tracking and records transfer system for homeless children. While many task force members like this idea, much concern was expressed over the feasibility, cost, and possibility of creating a paper-shuffling bureaucracy at both the state and local levels.

It should also be the policy of the state to eliminate the need for special shelter schools wherever possible, by assisting the public school system to absorb this special population. In cases

where shelter schools remain appropriate, ADE should encourage coordination with the local school system and work with shelter educators to ensure homeless children are receiving adequate educational opportunities.

REQUIRED LOCAL ACTIONS:

a. The McKinney Act requires that local districts provide services to homeless children that are comparable to services provided to other children.
b. To minimize the problem of homeless children "falling through the cracks" in local schools, each school district would be required to assign a staff person to the role of homeless education contact person. Depending on the district, the person may be a counselor, nurse, teacher, administrator, social worker, or admissions officer. Responsibilities would include:
   i) preparing required reports for ADE or USED
   ii) conducting outreach efforts to ensure homeless children are being placed in school
   iii) facilitating the admission of homeless children
   iv) facilitating the immediate assessment and placement of incoming homeless children

   Other activities the contact person could undertake would be:
   i) serving as an advocate of homeless children in school
   ii) coordinating with social service agencies to ensure other needs of homeless children are addressed

5. Lack of Support Services

KEY GOAL: Minimize the instances when concern over the cost of transportation is a barrier to educating homeless children.

STATE ACTION:

Explore alternative ways of inter-district transportation, such as Dial-A-Ride.

RECOMMENDED LOCAL ACTION:

Review district bus routes to ensure homeless children have access to transportation.

6. Lack of Adequate Funding

KEY GOAL: The high turnover and special needs of homeless children make them very expensive to educate. School districts will need sources of additional funds to adequately serve homeless children.

FEDERAL FUNDS:

The Arizona Department of Education is currently receiving $50,000 from the U.S. Department of Education to carry out its plan for education of homeless children and youth, and the same amount has been allocated to the state for the next two years.

The McKinney Act also authorized $2.5 million for fiscal years 1987-88, 1988-89, and 1989-90 for grants to state or local education agencies for "exemplary programs that successfully address the needs of homeless students."

Unfortunately, Congress has never appropriated the funds for this portion of the Act. That may change in FY 1990-91, based on President Bush's budget request for full funding of the McKinney Act. If appropriated, those funds will be available by the end of this year and ADE will prepare a proposal for a portion of those funds.

STATE FUNDS:

No appropriation of state funds is required to carry out the bare minimums of the ADE responsibilities contained in this state plan. The requirements of LEAs to provide more assistance to and more monitoring of homeless students certainly will put demands on already scarce school resources.

Task force members feel strongly that additional funds will be needed at the local level to achieve many of the goals contained in the plan. The consensus was that, at a minimum, the state should appropriate sufficient funds for the 1990-91 school to allow several pilot programs to examine specific approaches to homeless education.

Possible pilot projects to be carried out by local districts with state technical assistance might include: intensive social work programs and provision of basic services; increased levels of counseling, psychological assistance, or medical care; expanded transportation services; or testing and screening programs to see if developmental, physical, emotional, psychological, and educational needs of homeless children can be generalized.

Funding of a small number of such pilot programs would provide:

a) a compilation of data concerning the numbers of students affected and problems involved
b) a study of the costs (above basic services) of various approaches
c) a track record demonstrating which programs and approaches are successful and which aren't

VI. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

1. Implementation

Implementation of the plan will commence immediately upon its submission to the U.S. Department of Education (approximately April 3). The first step will be the distribution of the plan to school districts and shelter providers for homeless children and families, with emphasis on the recommended and required actions of both.

The first activity to be addressed by ADE will be raising the awareness of local school personnel. Contacts with professional organizations will begin immediately, training materials and presenters will be compiled, and a detailed timeline of communications and training efforts will be prepared within 30 days of the submission of the plan.

Consultation with high-priority districts will begin immediately, with a goal of 20 consultations conducted by June 15. Topics to be covered in these initial meetings will be a review of district admission policies, designation of a district contact person for homeless issues, ideas for improved services and outreach, and an assessment of the need for additional technical assistance or training.

Another early activity will be the development of a resource directory of services available to homeless children and families that will be distributed to school districts.

The second phase of the plan's implementation (June through August) will focus on:

a. Planning training sessions for the beginning of school in the fall
b. Working with other agencies and professional organizations to obtain additional support and medical services for homeless children
c. Preparing appropriate legislative proposals (if needed), for 1990 legislative session; including funding for pilot programs
d. Exploring alternative ways to provide interdistrict transportation for homeless children (if needed)
e. Exploring costs and feasibility of a variety of educational tools, including resource kits, testing and screening programs, a portable curriculum, and a tracking and records transfer system.

In addition to continuing progress on the items above, the third phase of the plan's implementation (September through December) will include a public education effort, in conjunction with the opening of schools in the fall.

2. Monitoring

Monitoring will be necessary on two levels: Ensuring that local districts are meeting the requirements of the plan and taking additional actions when appropriate; and ensuring that the state Department of Education is fulfilling its responsibilities as outlined in the plan.

Monitoring of local programs will be carried out as follows:

a. Within 60 days of submission of the plan, each district will be required to have named its contact person for homeless education programs. Districts which have not met that deadline will be contacted individually to ensure their compliance.
b. Districts that have homeless children staying within their boundaries will be asked to complete a report (within 90 days of submission of the plan) outlining admission policies and efforts to assist homeless children. Districts that have a difficult time completing such a report, or that indicate deficiencies in their policies, will be scheduled for early consultation and technical assistance.
c. ADE will disseminate examples of successful local programs throughout the state, and will take steps to recognize those programs in a variety of forums.

Monitoring of state actions in implementing the plan will be carried out in the following manner:

a. Every 90 days after submission of the plan, a status report outlining activities completed and in progress will be prepared for ADE management.
b. Although the Superintendent's Task Force will be discharged following submission of the plan, the quarterly status reports described above will be distributed to the Task Force members for their review and comment.
c. An annual report to the U.S. Department of Education will be prepared, as required by the McKinney Act, containing an assessment of the numbers and educational status of homeless children. The annual report will allow comparison of numbers and trends from year to year.

APPENDIX 1

DEFINITION OF HOMELESS

According to Title I, Sec. 103 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, the term "homeless" or "homeless individual" includes an individual who:

1. lacks a fixed, regular and adequate residence; or

2. has a primary nighttime residence that is:

   a) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
   b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized (prison inmates not included); or
   c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (e.g., cars, parks, the streets, abandoned buildings, desert camps).

Summary of Title VII, Subtitle A: EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

I. Policies

1. Each state shall assure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth have access to a free, appropriate public education.

2. The state shall review and undertake to revise residency requirements to assure that children of homeless individuals and homeless youth are afforded public education.

II. State plan

Each state shall adopt a plan to provide for the education of each homeless child or youth. The plan shall:

1. authorize appropriate agencies or individuals to make determinations necessary to carry out this law; and

2. provide procedures for the resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth

III. Local district responsibilities

1. Local education agencies shall either:

a) continue the child's education in the school district of origin for the remainder of the school year; or
b) enroll the child or youth in the district where the child is actually living;

whichever is in the child's best interest.

2. The choice shall be made regardless of whether the child is living with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parents.

V. School records

Records of each homeless child shall be maintained:

1. so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school district; and

2. in a manner consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

V. Comparability of services

Each homeless child shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school attended, including inclusion in such programs as Chapter 1, handicapped, English as a Second Language, vocational education, gifted, and school meals.

APPENDIX 2

Subtitle B—Education for Homeless Children and Youth

SEC. 721. STATEMENT OF POLICY. 42 USC 11431.

It is the policy of the Congress that—

(1) each State educational agency shall assure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth have access to a free, appropriate public education which would be provided to the children of a resident of a State and is consistent with the State school attendance laws; and

(2) in any State that has a residency requirement as a component of its compulsory school attendance laws, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws to assure that the children of homeless individuals and homeless youth are afforded a free and appropriate public education.

SEC. 722. GRANTS FOR STATE ACTIVITIES FOR THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH. 42 USC 11432.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Education is, in accordance with the provisions of this section, authorized to make grants to States to carry out the activities described in subsections (c), (d), and (e).

(b) ALLOCATION.—From the amounts appropriated for each fiscal year pursuant to subsection (g), the Secretary shall allot to each State an amount which bears the same ratio to the amount appropriated in each such year as the amount allocated under section 111

of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (as incorporated by reference in chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981) to the local educational agencies in the State in that year bears to the total amount allocated to such agencies in all States, except that no State shall receive less than $50,000 in any fiscal year. 20 USC 3801 note.

(c) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Grants under this section shall be used—

(1) to carry out the policies set forth in section 721 in the State;

(2) to establish or designate an Office of Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children and Youth in accordance with subsection (d); and Office of Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children and Youth, establishment.

(3) to prepare and carry out the State plan described in subsection (e).

(d) FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE OF COORDINATOR.—The Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children and Youth established in each State shall—

(1) gather data on the number and location of homeless children and youth in the State, and such data gathering shall include the nature and extent of problems of access to, and placement of, homeless children and homeless youth in elementary and secondary schools, and the difficulties in identifying the special needs of such children; Schools and colleges.

(2) develop and carry out the State plan described in subsection (e); and

(3) prepare and submit to the Secretary an interim report not later than December 31, 1987, and a final report not later than December 31, 1988, on the data gathered pursuant to paragraph (1). Reports.

To the extent that reliable current data is available in the State, each coordinator described in this subsection may use such data to fulfill the requirements of paragraph (1).

(e) STATE PLAN.—

(1) Each State shall adopt a plan to provide for the education of each homeless child or homeless youth within the State which will contain provisions designed to—

(A) authorize the State educational agency, the local educational agency, the parent or guardian of the homeless child, the homeless youth, or the applicable social worker to make the determinations required under this section; and

(B) provide procedures for the resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth.

(2) Each plan adopted under this subsection shall assure, to the extent practicable under requirements relating to education established by State law, that local educational agencies within the State will comply with the requirements of paragraphs (3) through (6).

(3) The local educational agency of each homeless child or youth shall either—

(A) continue the child's or youth's education in the school district of origin for the remainder of the school year; or

(B) enroll the child or youth in the school district where the child or youth is actually living;

whichever is in the child's best interest or the youth's best interest.

(4) The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth is living with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parents.

(5) Each homeless child shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected according to the provisions of paragraph (3), including educational services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria, such as compensatory educational programs for the disadvantaged, and educational programs for the handicapped and for students with limited English proficiency; programs in vocational education; programs for the gifted and talented; and school meals programs.

(6) The school records of each homeless child or youth shall be maintained— Records

(A) so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school district; and

(B) in a manner consistent with section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act. 20 USC 1232g

(f) APPLICATION.—No State may receive a grant under this section unless the State educational agency submits an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such information as the Secretary may reasonably require.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) There are authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 1987 and 1988 to carry out the provisions of this section.

(2) Sums appropriated in each fiscal year shall remain available for the succeeding fiscal year.

SEC. 723. EXEMPLARY GRANTS AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED. 42 USC 11433

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—

(1) The Secretary shall, from funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (f), make grants for exemplary programs that successfully address the needs of homeless students in elementary and secondary schools of the applicant.

(2) The Secretary shall, in accordance with subsection (e), conduct dissemination activities of exemplary programs designed to meet the educational needs of homeless elementary and secondary school students.

(b) APPLICANTS.—The Secretary shall make grants to State and local educational agencies for the purpose described in paragraph (1) of subsection (a).

(c) ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANTS.—No applicant may receive an exemplary grant under this section unless the applicant is located in a State which has submitted a State plan in accordance with the provisions of section 722.

(d) APPLICATION.—Each applicant which desires to receive a demonstration grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such information as the Secretary may reasonably require. Each such application shall include—

(1) a description of the exemplary program for which assistance is sought;

(2) assurances that the applicant will transmit information with respect to the conduct of the program for which assistance is sought; and

(3) such additional assurances that the Secretary determines are necessary.

(e) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall, from funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (f), conduct, directly or indirectly by way of grant, contract, or other arrangement, dissemination activities designed to inform State and local educational agencies of exemplary programs which successfully address the special needs of homeless students.

(f) APPROPRIATIONS AUTHORIZED.—There is authorized to be appropriated $2,500,000 for fiscal year 1988 to carry out the provisions of this section.

Reports 42 USC 11434

SEC. 724. NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to the Congress not later than June 30, 1988, a report on the number of homeless children and youth in all States.

(b) SECRETARIAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—

(1) The Secretary shall monitor and review compliance with the provisions of this subtitle in accordance with the provisions of the General Education Provisions Act.

(2) The Secretary shall prepare and submit a report to the Congress on the programs and activities authorized by this subtitle at the end of each fiscal year.

(3) The Secretary shall compile and submit a report to the Congress containing the information received from the States pursuant to section 722(d)(3) within 45 days of its receipt.

42 USC 11435

SEC. 725. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this subtitle—

(1) the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education; and

(2) the term "State" means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Arizona Revised Statutes applicable to the issue of educating homeless children and youth

15-802. Compulsory school attendance
- A. Every person who has custody of a child between the ages of 8 and 16 shall send the child to a school....

15.823. Admission...; tuition
- A. The (local) governing board may admit children who do not reside in the school district but who reside within this state upon such terms as it prescribes (but must charge tuition pursuant to 15.824.D.)
- E. The (local) governing board may admit children who are citizens of the U.S. but are non-residents of this state without payment of tuition if evidence indicates that the child's physical, mental, moral, or emotional health is best served by placement with a grandparent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, aunt or uncle who is a resident within the school district.

15-824. Admission of pupils of other school districts; definitions
- B. The residence of the person having legal custody of the pupil is considered the residence of the pupil, except as provided in 15-825.B. (which includes):
  1. A state rehabilitation or corrective institution
  2. Licensed foster home or child care agency supervised by DES
  3. Residential facility supported by DES
  4. Facility under the supervision of Department of Corrections

15-827. Presentation of withdrawal form
- A. A pupil who enters a school shall present to the principal of the school a properly executed withdrawal form if such pupil previously attended another school in this state.

15-828. Birth certificate; school records
- A. On enrollment..., the district shall notify the person enrolling the pupil in writing that within 30 days he must provide one of the following:
  1. Certified copy of birth certificate
  2. Other reliable proof of pupil's identity and age, including baptismal certificate, application for Social Security Number or original school records and an affidavit explaining the inability to provide a copy of the birth certificate.

E. Within 14 days after enrolling a transfer student..., a school shall request directly from the pupil's previous school a certified copy of his record.

15-803. Immunizations for school attendance

B. ...prior to attending school in the state, the parent or guardian or person in loco parentis of a child shall submit to the school administrator an immunization record of such child.... Such record shall contain one of the following statements signed by such parent or guardian...:

1. That the child has received the immunizations prescribed....
5. That the child's necessary immunizations will be initiated within fifteen days of the first day of school attendance and completed in accordance with this section.

D. A child is not entitled to attend school unless the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis has submitted one of the statements required pursuant to subsection B of this section.

AMPHITHEATER HIGH SCHOOL

The Amphitheater High School Homeless Project began two years ago out of a concern about so many of our students who were living on their own, trying to stay in school and maintain a stable environment.

Many of these students were good students having a very difficult time keeping up with their studies; they were struggling with health issues caused by stress, and they were dropping out of school because they just could not juggle everything in their lives.

Child Protective Services had quit accepting most teens by this time, so we were unable to get help from them.

Several teachers and counselors began to talk about ways to help the students maintain a stable environment so that they could concentrate on graduating from high school and then go on to college. High school was the biggest hurdle because of their age and the lack of financial aid available for high school students.

One Sunday morning, my church, St. Andrew's Presbyterian, held a meeting to discuss a project to help the homeless. That Sunday morning, we happened to have four teen girls in our home. Two were homeless, and two were our foster daughters. My husband and I decided I should go to the meeting and share the story of high school homelessness.

I shared the story and shocked everyone at the meeting because the general public had no idea that high-school-aged children could be without families who were able to care for them and provide them with a stable home.

A committee was formed, and we decided to open a home for homeless students. We were able to raise $80,000. The home was opened and remained open for over a year. The cost was very high, and we could only help a few students. From publicity about the project, I was able to raise another $10,000 that year. I began to give families who had taken individual students a stipend of $100 a month. Several of our students live on their own. I am now providing students who are referred to me by friends, teachers, and other counselors a stipend of $100 a month.

The amount of money is very small, but it is enough to help offset the extra food bill and cost of utilities for the "foster" family who has taken in the student. It also gives the foster family a feeling of support and partnership in helping this student make it through high school.

In most cases, the student has found their own family; usually, it is a friend whom they have asked to live with. In some cases, I have found families or situations if the student cannot find his or her own family or is not ready to live in an apartment, usually sharing with a friend.

There are four rules that must be met for these students to be helped by our "homeless project:"

1. The student under 18 must have a written, notarized statement from his or her legal guardian giving him/her permission to live where it is he/she is living.

2. The student must remain in school to receive assistance.

3. The student must agree to go to counseling once a week in order to process the hurt and anger that is always present when a student has gone through whatever trauma they have had to experience while displaced or homeless.

4. The student must find employment in order to make the transition to independent living. Usually, they are already employed when they come into the program.

We are presently helping close to 25 students with a $100 a month stipend. The number grows daily. I am having a difficult time keeping up with financial resources, since I must get the money from churches, civic organizations, or foundations. We have an organization that I am a member of called Amphitheater Men's Club. This club has a tax-free number and is willing to be the organization that collects the donations. This club has been giving most of its resources to the needy students at Amphitheater High School for many years. The students receive a free lunch if they are in the program.

We have a medical doctor, a dentist, and a therapist who see our students for free. These people are volunteers and want to help. Our program is a prevention program because it prevents the student from dropping out of high school. It also prevents the students from going to the streets and becoming part of the "homeless" population whose homeless lifestyle becomes ingrained. We believe we lose kids to the streets if they are homeless three to six months.

Some case studies are as follows:

Jerry—15-year-old boy. Mom is in jail for cocaine addiction and problems related to that addiction. He and his 19-year-old sister got an apartment together. The sister is working late at night and spending most of her time with her boyfriend. Jerry's grades are slipping, he is sick a lot, and he needs a "mom." I just talked with a friend of his mother. The woman will take Jerry temporarily but will need the monthly stipend to make ends meet.

Susie—15-year-old girl. Mother died several years ago. The aunt took Susie, but the aunt and uncle just lost their apartment and will be living in their van. Susie needs a family. C.P.S. will not get involved, at least for now.

Mike and Stacey—seniors. Stacey is pregnant. Mike's father hates Stacey. The baby is due any day. They cannot live with either family. They need financial help so they can get their own apartment.

Sabrina—18-year-old senior. Was in terrible stress. She was referred to me by her teacher. She was living with a cousin who had lost her apartment. The cousin was moving into her ex-husband's mother's home. There was no room for Sabrina. We found a room for her to rent, helped her get a job, and pay $100 a month for her rent. She pays $50 a month out of her wages and buys her own food. She is doing well in school and will graduate in May.

Truong—17-year-old Vietnamese refugee. Top 5 percent of his class. He will receive a full scholarship to ASU when he graduates in May of 1990. He lives with a friend and his family. We provide him $100 a month so he can help the family buy food and pay part of the rent.

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Amber—just turned 18. She is an honor student who plans to go to Harvard or Yale. Her mother has kicked her out a half-dozen times. Mom is mentally ill. Amber moved in with another honor student who is living on her own. We are helping her financially so she can make it to the end of the year.

The list goes on and on. My estimate is that 10 percent of our students are displaced or "near homeless." We can help as many as we can find funds for. The list is growing daily, and I hope we can find money to help keep all of them in school.

Prepared by: Ann Young, School Counselor

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nqa489

APACHE JUNCTION UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Following is a model for homeless and/or at-risk children and youth that is in the process of being implemented by the Apache Junction Unified School District. Levels four through six have been operational in the district for several years. The Home/School Visitors Program and Project HELP is an integral part of the program. Indeed, it has been largely responsible for the high degree of success that the district has had in accommodating the needs of at-risk and/or homeless children.

MODEL FOR HOMELESS/AT-RISK CHILDREN AND YOUTH

OBJECTIVE: To provide an appropriate educational program for at-risk, homeless children and youth.

LEVEL ONE—An educational program that includes:

- a self-paced, individualized curriculum
- behavioral health counseling
- residential placement (i.e., Arizona Boys Ranch/Girls Ranch or other comparable programs).

LEVEL TWO—Storefront school that includes:

- open entry
- flexible schedule
- a basic education program that provides instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics
- instruction in basic survival skills
- counseling
- behavior modification
- work exposure, work experience, and ultimately job placement
- G.E.D. program.

LEVEL THREE—A cooperative alternative school that provides the following:

- cooperation between high schools and community colleges to deliver an appropriate educational placement for mature students
- open entry
- flexible schedule
- vocational training
- general studies program
- terminal training for specific skills
- counseling
- work experience
- job placement
- Associate of Arts degree
- University/College transfer program.

LEVEL FOUR—School within a school program that includes:

- late afternoon/early evening education program
- parallel alternative curriculum
- academic remediation
- an alternative placement for students who must work to support themselves
- counseling
- enrichment programs designed to help improve self-esteem
- project turnaround
- computer-assisted instruction
- mainstreaming.

LEVEL FIVE—Home/School Visitors Program—The purpose of the home/school visitors program is to:

- provide a liaison between the family and school to identify environmental conditions that may have an adverse effect upon children and their education
- coordinate state, county, and city social programs with home/school visitor services to help meet the needs of at-risk children and their families, including the homeless
- providing a liaison between the school, the family, and appropriate social service agencies
- visiting homes and families where applicable
- coordinates with parents, children, and school officials regarding attendance, health, chronic truancy, or other social programs that affect the ultimate success of students
- maintains a directory of referral services and agencies
- identifies and uses appropriate community resources
- evaluates the eligibility of children for participation in the federal hot lunch/ breakfast program
- encourages all homeless and/or low-income families to participate in the lunch program. Provides assistance in filling out federal lunch applications. (The objective is to place homeless children and youth on the lunch program, beginning with the very first day of school. In instances where parents are unable or unwilling to complete lunch applications, the home/school visitor will serve as advocate for the child so that the child can participate in the program without the parent's signature.)
- monitor the attendance of chronically truant children, taking whatever steps are necessary within established procedures to force attendance. In order to adequately monitor the truancy component of this program, the following specific tasks will be conducted as noted:

  1. Drive through local shopping centers, paying special attention to areas that attract children and youth.
  2. Check areas in the community where homeless are known to congregate or camp on a weekly basis.

3. Check homes known to be gathering places for truant children.
4. Check with attendance office personnel daily, and identify problem students for immediate follow-up.

- contact parents who do not have telephones to communicate school concerns
- coordinate with county school office to monitor the progress of children that are taught at home
- serve as a liaison between special education, the school, and families.

LEVEL SIX—Project HELP—A program designed to help low-income and homeless families with school-age children. Specific functions include:

- make presentations to religious organizations, civic groups, and community centers to explain the mission of Project HELP and articulate its needs
- solicit donations of money, food stuffs, clothing, furniture, bedding, etc.
- serves as a liaison between home and family to ensure that families receiving assistance participate in the education of their children
- provides transportation for parents to and from school conferences if necessary
- coordinate appointments with doctors and dentists for children as needed and provides transportation if necessary
- coordinate home visits to determine whether or not assistance is needed in the development of homemaking skills
- coordinate the pickup of donations as needed
- deliver food, commodities, etc. to families that do not have transportation
- delivers food if needed on an emergency basis
- coordinates traditional holiday charity projects, including Thanksgiving and Christmas, among the various organizations that provide food baskets for needy families
- coordinates Christmas parties for children with civic organizations and homeowners associations including adult trailer parks, etc.
- maintains a warehouse that contains food stuffs, furniture, clothing, and other commodities for distribution to homeless children and their families
- refers families to appropriate social agencies according to need
- provides financial support on an emergency basis to provide:

  (a) medications
  (b) doctor/dentist
  (c) utilities
  (d) rent
  (e) auto parts and/or repair

(f) eye care
(g) gasoline if needed to get to work or job interview
(h) personal grooming needs
(i) school fees including lab fees, book fees, etc.
(j) graduation expenses including caps, gowns, etc.

Prepared by: Dr. William Wright, Superintendent
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nqa489

THE SCHOOLHOUSE
PHOENIX SPECIAL PROGRAMS

THE SCHOOLHOUSE is an accredited classroom for elementary-aged children of homeless families. Located at Central Arizona Shelter Services in Phoenix, it is believed to be only the fourth such classroom in the country. Twenty-five thousand dollars seed money for the project came from the Valley of the Sun United Way, Thunderbird Youth Venture Fund, in May 1988. Additional donations of $3,000 cash and all equipment, books, and classroom supplies have ensured the establishment of an appropriate learning environment.

The program's basis is a cooperative effort. CASS provides the space and family case management. Phoenix Elementary School District No. 1 provides meals and testing materials. Phoenix Special Programs, the actual grantee, is a private, nonprofit 1969 outgrowth of the Phoenix Union High School District, and accredited through North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as a Special Function School. It hires the teacher and administers all aspects of the educational program.

The purposes of THE SCHOOLHOUSE are to assess children, remediate reading and math skills, broaden experiences, and build self-esteem. More than 60 percent of the children are behind grade level in reading and obviously lack reading values and role models.

Volunteers cover the following areas once or twice each week: science, music, art, Magic Circle, calligraphy, and after-hours Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. A psychiatrist volunteers for eight hours each week. Eight instructional aides assist the teacher by working individually with the children.

Today's facts about the homeless in Maricopa County—and about homelessness in general—should dispel any preconceptions the public has about "winos" and "bums" wandering our streets. Stereotypical adult male alcoholics have been joined by families in increasing numbers—a 35 percent increase in Maricopa County in the past two years. One thousand two hundred of the 10,000 homeless people in our area are children, and they are here to stay. Either the parents are from the greater Phoenix area originally, or they have come here because of our desirable economy and weather. Total homeless lodgings no longer significantly decrease with the seasons.

What is the picture of the average CASS family and classroom student? From the CASS family program, which houses 24-30 people on any day, THE SCHOOLHOUSE, since May, has served 82 students from four to 14 years. Eight is the average age. Prior to coming to the classroom, 50 percent had resided in Phoenix or Arizona more than three months. Forty percent of enrolled students attended THE SCHOOLHOUSE for three weeks or longer and another 20 percent for one to two weeks. (The average family stay at CASS is 35 to 45 days.) Most parents are 9th grade dropouts. Eighty-five percent are single, and over 50 percent have had a history of spouse or child abuse within the family unit.

Parents are glad to learn that there is a classroom, since they feel guilty that their children are not in school. A January survey of CASS parents indicates that they like the classroom because it challenges the children, provides individualized attention, and allows the parents proximity to the teacher. A few parents specifically mentioned that their children seem more confident.

In fact, THE SCHOOLHOUSE was set up because children of homeless families have a difficult time in public school. First, the schools find serving them a managerial challenge. Testing a child for placement, for example, requires time and access to parents—two luxuries that homelessness does not afford to schools. Obtaining birth and immunization records is nearly impossible. Second, absences and short stays hamper continuity of education. The children's often high absence rate in public school may be because of estrangement from peers, transportation problems, illness, and sibling care. Most are either academically behind or emotionally traumatized because of the many schools, many homes, and their parents' shattered lives. Five-year-olds are often more like "average" two-year-olds in skills and concentration level. Even older children may have very narrow experiences—never heard a live choir, never attended a circus, never saw a science experiment. One child was in no fewer than nine kindergartens in one school year. Despite this picture, some children have the ability to "catch on" to academics quickly. We wonder, is giftedness there, waiting to spring into action, spurred by appropriate academic and emotional support?

Phoenix Special Programs must continue to seek funds to keep the doors open after March 1989. Phoenix Elementary School District No. 1, private foundations, and community donations all represent future possibilities.

Prepared by: Marcia Newman, Executive Director

Phoenix Special Programs
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Phoenix, AZ 85017-4589

263-5661

nqa489

WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

A homeless population exists to a minimal degree in the geographic areas around Desert View and Shaw Butte Elementary Schools and, to a larger degree, in the Mountain View and Sunnyslope Elementary School areas.

A moderate percentage of the population in all these schools is characterized by jailed parents, parents on drugs, children abandoned (at least temporarily) domestic violence, and especially single-parent households. These families, in particular, experience severe financial hardship.

In addition, the transiency rate is over 50 percent. Many of these families live in substandard housing situations such as: several families sharing one unit; families living in one-room apartments; families that are evicted repeatedly for nonpayment of rent when there is no adequate or viable source of income; and dilapidated and roach-infested housing.

A more precise description and measurement of this troubled population is incomplete for two reasons:

(1) This kind of information is often hidden due to fears of reprisal by Child Protective Services, the police, or school administrators

(2) The information is not generally offered, nor is there reason to offer it in the typical school setting.

At the present time, once families are identified, either by self-referral, disclosure by student or peer, home visit, or referral by teacher or other community member, they are referred for services based on their needs.

Frequently, referrals address basic needs such as food, clothing, transportation, medical and dental needs, utility assistance, and near eviction. Unfortunately, most of the requests for shelter assistance go unanswered due to lack of resources in this area.

Specific barriers for housing assistance include two-year-long waiting lists for the Section 8 "regular" program, while the Section 8 "homeless" program is limited to one-bedroom units, which virtually disqualifies all but the single Chronically Mentally-Ill (CMI). Other barriers are: lack of safe housing alternatives such as (local) housing projects; lack of shelter space and restrictive shelter policies such as time-limited stay, religious requirements, and shelters requiring clients to remain off-grounds during the day.

Solutions need to address a consolidated effort and an increase in the availability and accessibility of resources. This means: a link between existing community resources and agencies serving the homeless; additional social workers in the schools to identify homeless children and families and to case manage their efforts to utilize services successfully; more decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing with easier access for the homeless; increased availability of free medical and dental services for non-AHCCCS homeless; transportation to services; and a more comprehensive food assistance program.

Prepared by: Susan Young and Sandra Wiley, School Social Workers.

Shaw Butte School, 12202 N. 21st Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85029

nqa489 866-5282 or 866-5161

OFFICE OF EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH
ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Return to: 1535 W.Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ 85007
Bill H. Scheel, 255-5235

Facility: _____ County: _____

Contact person: _____ Phone # _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

1. a) Type of housing: ____ (1) Emergency homeless shelter
____ (2) Hotel/motel vouchers
____ (3) Runaway shelter
____ (4) Domestic violence shelter
____ (5) Transitional housing
____ (6) Child crisis center
____ (7) other _____

b) Facility/service is: ____ (8) publicly operated
____ (9) privately operated

2. Nightly capacity: Total beds _____ (10)

(if applicable) men _____ (11)
women _____ (12)
children _____ (13)
families _____ (14)

3. Total lodgings (including duplication) during last complete month:

Total _____ (15) men _____ (16)
women _____ (17)
children _____ (18)
families _____ (19)

4. Are children or families permitted in the facility?

yes or no _____ (20)

IF NO, survey is concluded. IF YES, continue survey.

5. a) Average number of children served each night over past month _____ (21)

b) Is the demand for your children's facilities greater than your capacity?

yes or no (22)

6.. Average length of stay in facility _____ (23)

7. Age range of children: ____ %, 0-2 years (24)

____ %, 3-4 years (25)

____ %, 5-11 years (26)

____ %, 12-14 years (27)

____ %, 15-17 years (28)

Total = 100 %

8. Mobility patterns: a. Where do families/children come from? Give percentage of most recent previous residence.

___ (29) local area

___ (30) elsewhere in Arizona

___ (31) other western states

___ (32) Midwest

___ (33) East or South

___ (34) Mexico or Ctl Amer.

___ (35) other

___ (36) unknown

b. Where do families/children go after leaving your facility? (percentages)

____ (37) stay with family or friends (locally)

____ (38) transitional housing (locally)

____ (39) long-term housing (locally)

____ (40) other shelter facility

____ (41) "on the street"

____ (42) out-of-state

____ (43) unknown

____ (44) other-describe _____

9. Is day care provided for infants and young children?

yes or no _____ (45)

10. Do school-age children: (in percentages)

____ (46) attend public schools?

____ (47) attend private schools?

____ (48) receive on-site instruction?

____ (49) receive no instruction?

11/12. If children are in school, describe special curriculum or logistical needs that are typically encountered. Describe difficulties encountered in enrolling homeless children or keeping them in school.

___ (50) Transiency

___ (51) Admission and records requirements

___ (52) Transportation

___ (53) Performance significantly below grade level

___ (54) Low self-esteem

___ (55) Lack of socialization or discipline skills

___ (56) Physical deprivation (hunger or inadequate clothing)

___ (57) Learning disabilities or handicaps

___ (58) Truancy

___ (59) Lack of preparation for school (materials, supplies)

___ (60) Lack of parental involvement

___ (61) Other

13. Have shelter personnel had contact with school personnel? If so, describe.

___ (62) Yes, minimal

___ (63) Yes, extensive

___ (64) No

14. Describe a profile of a typical homeless youth and/or family using your facility (include family size, circumstances, educational background of children and parents, etc.)

___ (65) Single mother parent

___ (66) More than one child

___ (67) Parents have high school diploma or less

___ (68) Parents are searching for job

___ (69) Child has been physically or sexually abused

___ (70) Parents suffer from mental illness/substance abuse

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH
1535 West Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ 85007
Bill H. Scheel, 542-5235

District: _____ Date: _____

Person Responding: _____ Phone: _____

1. Have homeless children attended school in your LEA during the past year?

   _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know

   IF "NO" OR "DON'T KNOW," SKIP TO QUESTIONS 11, 12, AND 13 TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY.

2. If "YES," indicate:

   Number of homeless children attending school in past year: _____

   Average length of enrollment: _____

3. What grade level have homeless students been in? List percentages:

   K-3: _____ percent
   4-6: _____ percent
   7-8: _____ percent
   9-12: _____ percent
   100 percent _____ Don't Know

4. List schools attended by homeless children.

   _____

   _____

5. Is there a particular time of year homeless children were in attendance? If so, elaborate.

   _____

   _____

   _____

noa028

6. Indicate special programs utilized by homeless children.

_____ Chapter 1
_____ Bilingual
_____ At-Risk
_____ Other (describe) _____
_____ None

7. What are the major difficulties your schools face in educating homeless children? Mark all applicable.

_____ Transiency
_____ Physical deprivation (hunger, inadequate clothing)
_____ Performing significantly below grade level
_____ Learning disabilities or handicaps
_____ Truancy
_____ Lack of parent involvement
_____ Low self-esteem
_____ Lack of discipline or socialization skills
_____ Lack of preparation for school (materials, supplies)
_____ Administrative (admission, recordkeeping, etc.)
_____ Other (describe) _____

8. Do you provide transportation to school for homeless children? Is this different from that provided other students?

9. Describe any problems or special processes for obtaining or transferring records.

10. Do you coordinate services with social service agencies or providers of homeless services? If so, describe.

11. Have you ever refused enrollment to a homeless or displaced child? If so, on what basis?

_____ Lack of birth certificate or proper identification
_____ Lack of immunization records
_____ No permanent address
_____ Child living with friend or relative
_____ Child living outside LEA boundary
_____ Other (describe) _____

12. Do you know of homeless children in your district who are not attending school and have not attempted to enter school? If "YES," identify facility or location where children/family are residing.

13. If you wish to designate another person in your district to be contacted regarding this project, please list name and telephone.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
(Title)